



Brian Willer

Maureen Forrester, now 60, has had a distinguished career as a recitalist and recording artist. Now at an age when many people think of retiring, she appears to be expanding her stage career. This season, she was inducted into Canada's Juno Hall of Fame and now plans to make her operatic debut at the famed La Scala in Milan in the role of the Countess in Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*, a role that allows her to use her dramatic talents as well as her voice.

New Generation

But there is a new generation of Canadian singers on the boards, a coterie that is filling important niches in opera houses in the United States and Europe, as well as the many venues at home in Canada.

Maureen Forrester, a distinguished recitalist and recording artist, will soon make her operatic debut in Milan as the Countess in Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*.

Tenor Ben Heppner, who won the first Birgit Nilsson Prize in 1989, has since gone on to debut at La Scala with the Swedish Royal Opera in Wagner's *Lohengrin*, and at the Vienna State Opera as Bacchus. Other engagements include major operatic appearances in Geneva, Cologne, New York, Marseille and Los Angeles.

Another Canadian tenor, Paul Frey, has been turning the operatic world on its ear with his appearances at the Bayreuth Festival, the official home of Wagner opera. His appearance as Lohengrin has won him appreciation for his vocal and artistic talent. He is expanding his repertoire to include Richard Strauss and Beethoven on stages in London, Munich, Cologne and, soon, the rest of the world.

Stratas as Tosca

Teresa Stratas, a holdover from the operatic scene of the 1960s and 1970s, continues to conquer audiences with her vibrant interpretations of dramatic roles. Recently, however, her focus seems to be on recordings, both audio and video. She is scheduled to sing her first Tosca at the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1991.

The recording careers of Canadian singers Nancy Argenta and Catherine Robbin, who have specialized in the baroque and classical eras, have won them appreciative fans around the world. Both have recorded with such prestigious international figures as conductors Trevor Pinnock and John Eliot Gardiner.

Also carving a major career for himself is tenor Richard Margison, who has been busy honing his craft in Canadian concert halls and opera houses and who scored a major success in London in 1989 in Verdi's *Masked Ball*. The list of vocalists seems almost endless.

Distinguished Instrumentalists

Among instrumentalists, the roster is just as distinguished, though not as extensive, and none has yet reached the outstanding stature of a Gould. Cellist Ofra Harnoy has become a pop cult figure in Europe where her albums are best-sellers. And Louis

Lortie, who won the prestigious Busoni Piano Competition in 1984, has found his career leapfrogging over more established artists. He has toured internationally with the Toronto Symphony, the Montreal Symphony and the National Arts Centre Orchestra and has attracted favourable comment everywhere.

Lortie's career has also been assisted by a recording contract with the British Chandos label, which has enabled him to explore a wide repertoire, including both conservative and "pyrotechnical" works, that has whetted the audience's appetite for personal appearances.

International competitions are always a useful leg up the career ladder. American Murray Perahia and Romanian Radu Lupu got their careers started when they won the Leeds International Piano Competition. John Kimura Parker, who won the Leeds

